



TECH & LEARNING

IDEAS AND TOOLS FOR ED TECH LEADERS | APRIL 2010 | \$6

Below is an excerpt from Page 30 of this issue.

The Lifelong Learning Toolbelt

Schools need to refocus professional development on learning how to learn with technology. The vast majority of professional development focuses on instead creating a product, i.e. movies, podcasts, documents, etc. Until education seriously believes in technology as more than a tool, we will continue to implement weak initiatives and see vast amounts of professional development money wasted.

Educators can start this process by creating a "Lifelong Learning Tool Belt." This is a set of tools you need to do the best job you can as a tech-using educator. This toolbelt is illustrated in the accompanying diagram.

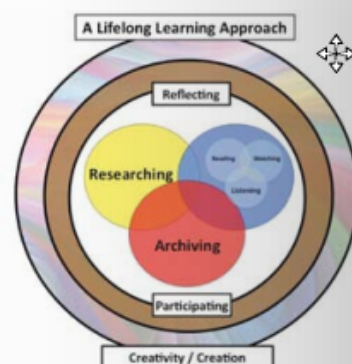
HERE ARE THE MEANING OF THE AREAS:

- **ARCHIVING:** Save and share the best resources for your work. Archiving is also a research tool.
- **RESEARCHING:** Learn how to find good resources, judge their merit, and reflect on their value as you continue to use the resource.
- **READING:** Continually follow the quality work from those that teach you well.

- **REFLECTING:** Write or record your thoughts on your learning experiences.
- **PARTICIPATE:** Join the conversation. Start slowly by listening and then jump into the discussion.
- **CREATIVITY/CREATION:** worry about what you think you should be creating or different creative uses of technology. We focus too much on what we want to do with technology and we don't focus enough on how that technology can help us learn.?

IMAGE AND COLOR SCHEME

Primary colors are chosen to represent the core skills of the learning tool belt. Each of the areas overlaps and is not independent of each other. You archive along with reading and you gain new resources through use of your reading, archiving and participation. Where the primary colors blend into brown, that is where you mix your core skills with the learning community at large. The outer ring is a rainbow because your level of creativity and thought can grow exponentially when you utilize the entire tool belt.



- **LEADING TOOLS:** These happen to be the current top tools, but they are replaceable:
- **SEARCH:** Google
- **READER:** RSS Feed Reader—Google Reader
- **ARCHIVING:** Delicious
- **REFLECTING:** Blogger.com
- **PARTICIPATING:** Twitter and NING

Scott Meech will present more on the Lifelong Learning Tool Belt at Chicago Tech Forum, Friday, April 23, 2010. Read more at <http://smeech-presos.wikispaces.com/Lifelong+Learning+Approach>

Related blogs:

<http://www.smeech.net/smeech/2009/8/3/is-technology-about-the-tools-and-what-about-a-toolbelt-part.html>

<http://www.smeech.net/smeech/2009/11/6/the-lifelong-learning-toolbelt-continued.html>